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A 15-Year-Old Is Behind Bars After Posting These Eminem Lyrics

He quotes Em's lyrics on Instagram.
By Adam Fleischer
Getty Images

NEW YORK, NY - JULY 20: Eminem attends the "Southpaw" New York premiere at AMC Loews Lincoln Square on July 20, 2015 in New York City. (Photo by Donna Ward/Getty Images)
By Adam Fleischer
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A high school student was arrested Monday night after school administrators flagged an Instagram post he wrote which contained Eminem lyrics and a reference to a school shooting.

According to *The Fresno Bee*, the 15-year-old was arrested on a felony charge of making terrorist threats, as well as for disrupting school activity.

The controversy started when the student wrote an Instagram post that included lyrics from Eminem's 2000 track "I'm Back."

The Em lyrics in question reference the 1999 Columbine High School shooting.

"I take seven [kids] from [Columbine], stand 'em all in line/ Add an AK-47, a revolver, a nine/ A MAC-11 and it oughta solve the problem of mine/ And that's a whole school of bullies shot up all at one time/ 'Cause (I'm) Shady, they call me as crazy/ As the world was over this whole Y2K thing"
The student wrote the lyrics almost verbatim, but did tweak one small portion towards the end, writing, "I'm just like Shady," rather than "I'm Shady."

"I take seven kids from Columbine, stand 'em all in a line, add an AK-47, a revolver, a nine, a MAC-11 and it oughtta solve the problem of mine. And that's a whole school of bullies shot up all at one time. I'm just like Shady and just as crazy as the world was over this whole Y2K thing."
In a press conference on Tuesday, Fresno Police Chief Jerry Dyer initially attributed the first half of the post to Em, and said that the student had written the second half. He later retracted that statement.

The cause for concern was reportedly deeper than the posted lyrics, though. According to the *Bee*, another student commented on the post.

"Bring me with man," the student reportedly wrote. "I got some stuff [to] settle."

From there, the 15-year-old reportedly responded: "Ill text you when...I got a couple idiots' blocks I could knock off."

According to Dyer, when authorities searched the student's home, they found a replica AK-47 Airsoft rifle, a handgun, a .357 Magnum revolver, a 12-gauge shotgun, ammunition and a bulletproof vest. The weapons were not registered, and both the student and his father denied knowledge of their existence in the home.

His attorney, Linden Lindahl, said the teen didn't post the Instagram message. In addition, he disputed police's characterization of his client, saying that he was not depressed nor had he been bullied in school. "His family describes him as a quiet kid with a circle of six to seven friends," Lindahl said.

Investigators, on the other hand, pointed to the death of the student's mother a year ago as a cause for distress, and said he recently broke up with his girlfriend, quit the football team and was not doing well in school.

"These are really all of the things we look for in individuals that historically have been involved in incidents like Columbine," Dyer said. "So we're very fortunate that this was brought to our attention. We have every reason to believe that he was reaching out for help...The weapons were present. The ammunition was present. Perhaps even the mindset was present to carry out those threats."

This isn't the first time Em's lyrics have been brought into a legal battle.

Late last year, the Supreme Court heard a case in which a man who had been arrested for making threats on Facebook claimed that his words were song lyrics, similar to Eminem's. Unlike the student in this case, that man, Anthony Elonis, didn't directly quote Slim Shady; instead, he claimed that he was influenced by the rap great.

In fact, his lawyers even referenced the exact same lyrics from "I'm Back" in their petition to the court, attempting to draw a comparison to what Elonis had written and what Em had. It was the first time the country's highest court heard a case about "true threats" on social media, and they eventually ruled in his favor and reversed the conviction.

With social media now such an important part of our lives and the way people express themselves, this likely won't be the last time there's an issue like this, with lyrics at the center.

Both San Joaquin Memorial High, where the student is currently enrolled, and St. Anthony's Catholic School, his former school, were closed on Tuesday but expected to reopen Wednesday.

According to ABC, the teen is currently in juvenile detention.